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General Assembly
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Security Council
Fifty-sixth year

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations

Question of Palestine

The situation in the Middle East

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Right of peoples to self-determination

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 11 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the following documents of the ninth Extraordinary Session of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), held at Doha, Qatar, on 10 October 2001:

I. Text of the address of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference of OIC, at the opening of the session (annex I);

II. Text of the final communiqué (annex II).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 21 (d), 25, 41, 42, 43, 118 and 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nassir Abdulaziz **Al-Nasser**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annexes to the letter dated 11 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Annex I

Address of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference, at the opening meeting of the ninth extraordinary session of the OIC Foreign Ministers, held at Doha on 10 October 2001

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Your Excellency Brother Yassir Arafat, President of the State of Palestine,

Your Highness and Excellencies,

Your Excellency Dr. Abdul Wahid Belkziz, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference,

Representatives of Arab and Islamic Organizations in the United States of America,

Honourable guests,

This meeting is held in the wake of very grave events that will certainly have wide repercussions on the international situation and the Muslim nation for a long time to come. The expected American military action on Afghanistan, backed by the support of the allied States, was launched on the seventh of this month as a response to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington last month, which shook the whole world with the heavy losses of the lives of innocent people, and the extensive destruction of a number of public and private properties it caused in the United States of America.

The consequences of this terrorist act and the military response to it will be casting their shadows on the entire world and presenting immense challenges not only to our Islamic countries but also to the whole international community. All this makes it incumbent upon us to meet for consultation on what we have to do to face up to these circumstances and on ways of dealing with their causes and consequences.

Allow me, on this occasion, to extend on your behalf to the people and Government of the United States of America our deep condolences and sincere sympathy and to stress our strongest condemnation of what has happened and our denunciation of these ignominious acts and the killing of the innocent and terrorizing of the peaceful. Such acts are contrary to all human values, international customs and heavenly laws and religions, including our true Islamic creed which advocates peace among human beings and urges tolerance, love and equality and not enmity and hatred.

While stressing our unequivocal rejection of these acts, we find that countering them should not affect innocent civilians and should not extend to any but those who carried out those attacks. This requires providing conclusive evidence against the culprits. The military action should be exclusively confined to the perpetrators after the release of such evidence, so that the international community can determine its position with discernment and substantiated evidence. Innocent peoples should not be the ones who eventually have to pay. This places on all of us considerable responsibility towards the Afghan people, who have suffered for long decades from wars and conflicts that have displaced millions of their sons and completely destroyed their infrastructure. The Ninth OIC Summit Conference, held at Doha, affirmed the urgent need to set up a fund to extend aid to the people of Afghanistan under the auspices of OIC. I think it is high time that a decision was taken to establish this fund, for which I announce here the contribution of the State of Qatar the sum of US$ 10 million.

Dear brothers,

Stating our position on these events, particular those that directly affect us as Muslims and those that affect us as members of the international community, requires that we point out first of all that our true religion holds human life high and respects the right of people to live in peace and security.

Islam is a religion of peace; its greeting is peace. Even at times when the Muslims were at their strongest

and most powerful, it pursued the course of peace and tolerance and upheld the rights of non-Muslims living under Islamic rule. It guaranteed their security and their sanctities and sacred places as well as their full civil rights.

Hence our condemnation of terrorism is not aimed at removing suspicion from Islam; it is denunciation of extremism, which exists throughout human societies and is not confined to a specific creed, culture or race. Moreover, it is necessary for countering extremism to address its causes that stir hatred and lead to violence.

Dear brothers,

The Islamic world was among the first to call for dialogue among civilizations as a means for interaction, agreement and rapprochement of their peoples, instead of falling into conflicting sects and opposing camps and being divided by clashing dichotomies based on the principle of "If you are not on my side, then you are against me". It is known to all that the United Nations General Assembly will soon issue an international document on dialogue among civilizations on the basis of an Islamic initiative and with reference to Islamic studies and documents which will be pivotal to this document.

This proves that the Islamic world has always been an active part of the international community on account of its civilization being one of international orientation, far removed from isolationism, introversion, xenophobia or antagonism to other civilizations or feeling the necessity of fighting or taking revenge on them.

Moreover, the Organization of the Islamic Conference was a forerunner in adopting a firm position on terrorism. Several years ago it arrived at a code for combating international terrorism, which was later included in a draft convention which the Islamic countries were invited to endorse.

Dear brothers,

Examination of past experiences allows us to arrive at formulas that would enable us to counter this hateful phenomenon, which does not differentiate between one race or another, nor recognize political or geographic boundaries or social or economic doctrines. The first thing that this requires is to work more for activating the role of the United Nations as the framework which holds together all countries of the world and represents international legality based on its Charter, which basically aims at maintaining international peace and security. To that end, the United Nations should call for an international conference to draft an international convention on combating terrorism that will be binding on all countries. The United Nations must carry out its full responsibilities for the codification of the provisions of that convention, its implementation, putting it into effect and setting the penalties for violation of its provisions, so that the combating of international terrorism is carried out under the United Nations umbrella and command, in accordance with the criteria agreed upon, the most important of which is the definition of terrorism and distinguishing between terrorism, on the one hand, and the struggle of peoples against foreign occupation and their legitimate right to defend their freedom and exercise self-determination as a natural right guaranteed by international law and customs on the other.

From this standpoint, the Palestinian people in their struggle for the liberation of their homeland are practising a lawful right in resisting the occupation that has usurped the land, displaced its people and imposed a policy of starvation and siege and the assassination of leading political figures, in its continuing attempts to stifle the freedom of these people and suppress their independence.

The international community should not permit the recent events in the United States of America to distract it from its role and blind it to shouldering its responsibilities towards the State terrorism practised by the Israeli Government against the Palestinian people, its grave escalation of the situation in the region and its attempt to exploit these events to create new situations in the region that would threaten security and stability.

The atrocities perpetrated against the Palestinian people are nothing but organized terrorism practised by the Israeli State against unarmed people who have no alternative other than resistance in defence of their rights, the protection of their holy places and standing up against the humiliation, oppression, killings and displacement inflicted upon them.

I must state here that there are voices in our Islamic Nation which spell out that State terrorism begets terrorist organizations, and that violence breeds violence. The only way to break this vicious circle is to grant the Palestinian people their legitimate rights,

foremost among which is their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State on their national soil, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

From this standpoint, we call upon the international community, *and primarily the* United States of America, which is also one of the co-sponsors of the peace process along with the Russian Federation, as well as upon all influential international parties, to shoulder their responsibilities and provide the required international protection for the Palestinian people in the face of the Israeli war machine, as a preliminary step towards the resumption of the peace process on its original bases, in accordance with the resolutions of international legality and the principle of "land for peace".

I should like, on this occasion, to express satisfaction at the statements, in this respect, made by the United States President George Bush when he spoke of establishing the Palestinian State as being part of the strategic American vision of settling the conflict in our region. This position represents, in our view, a positive development of great importance, which will put things on their true course. We cannot but express the hope that the United States will move quickly to put this position into effect and seek to attain this strategic goal in the framework of the relevant international resolutions adopted in this connection so as to make it possible to pave the way for bringing about comprehensive, durable and just peace for all peoples and States in the region.

I must also commend the fair and responsible position taken by the United States President and the leaders of the European States in opposing attempts to exploit those tragic events to falsely accuse the Arabs and Muslims of terrorism, as well as their stand against those dubious attempts to insult Arabs and Muslims.

Dear brothers,

You are most welcome in your country. I hope that your meeting will bring about a unified position on the extremely grave events that are taking place in the world today. I beseech Almighty God to bestow success on you for the good of our Islamic Nation and the whole world.

May the peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.

Annex II

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Final communique of the ninth extraordinary session of the Organization of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Doha, Qatar on 10 October 2001

At the gracious invitation of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar and Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference, the Foreign Ministers of the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference held an extraordinary session at Doha, capital of the State of Qatar, on Wednesday, 10 October 2001, to discuss the repercussions of the events which took place in the United States of America and their effects worldwide and in particular on member States.

The Conference was opened by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar and Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference, who delivered an address in which he referred to the situation that resulted from the recent terrorist attacks in the United States of America and its consequences for the world in general and member States in particular.

His Excellency Mr. Yasir Arafat, President of the State of Palestine, then delivered a speech to the same effect, as well as pointing out the grave situation prevailing in the Palestinian territories.

Then a message from His Majesty King Mohammed VI of the Kingdom of Morocco, Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee, was read out, followed by a speech by His Excellency the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The Conference commended the address by the representative of the Islamic and Arab Organizations in the United States on behalf of the Muslim communities residing in the United States of America. It also welcomed the Christian-Islamic delegation accompanying President Yasir Arafat.

The Conference then proceeded to elect its Bureau as follows:

- State of Qatar — Chairman;
- Malaysia, Republic of Senegal, State of Palestine — Vice-Chairmen;
- Republic of Mali — Rapporteur.

His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem Bin Jabr Al Thani, Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar and Chairman of the ninth extraordinary session of Foreign Ministers of States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, then assumed the Chair.

After debate and discussion, the Conference reached the following conclusions:

1. The Conference strongly condemned the brutal terrorist acts that befell the United States, caused huge losses in human lives from various nationalities and wreaked tremendous destruction and damage in New York and Washington. It further reaffirmed that these terrorist acts ran counter to the teachings of the divine religions as well as ethical and human values, stressed the necessity of tracking down the perpetrators of these acts in the light of the results of investigations and bringing them to justice to inflict on them the penalty they deserve, and underscored its support of this effort. In this respect, the Conference expressed its condolences to and sympathy with the people and Government of the United States and the families of the victims in these mournful and tragic circumstances.

2. The Conference, proceeding from the provisions of the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, reaffirmed the willingness of its member States to effectively contribute to an international collective effort, under the umbrella of the United Nations as the forum where all States of the world are represented, to define the phenomenon of terrorism in all its forms and without selectiveness or double standards and to contribute also to addressing its causes, eradicating its roots and achieving international security and stability.

3. The Conference stressed that such shameful terrorist acts are opposed to the tolerant divine message of Islam which spurns aggression, calls for peace, coexistence, tolerance and respect among people, highly prizes the dignity of human life and prohibits the killing of the innocent. If further rejected any attempts to allege the existence of any connection or

relation between the Islamic faith and the terrorist acts, as such attempts are not in the interest of multilateral efforts to combat terrorism and further damage relations among peoples of the world. It stressed as well the need to undertake a joint effort to promote dialogue and create linkage between the Islamic world and the West in order to reach mutual understanding and build bridges of confidence between the two civilizations.

4. The Conference welcomed the positions adopted by both the United States and the other countries that called on their citizens to avoid causing any harm to citizens of Arab and Islamic descent and to Arabs and Muslims residing therein. It also called upon the international community to undertake the necessary measures to protect the rights of innocent civilians and avoid causing any harm to them during the process of undertaking any preventive measures in the fight against the phenomenon of terrorism and denounced aberrant voices that have tried to cause harm to Islam and Muslims.

5. The Conference reaffirmed the need to convene an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations to reflect the rejection by the international community of the use of terrorism in international relations, to agree on its definition and to draw up an international plan to combat terrorism within the framework of respect of member States' sovereignty and of international law. The United Nations, on the basis of such universally recognized definitions and guidelines, is the legitimate body to determine engagement or support for terrorism by any State or group.

6. The Conference stressed its rejection of any linkage between terrorism and the rights of the Islamic and Arab peoples, including the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, the right to self-determination, self-defence, sovereignty and resistance against Israeli and foreign occupation, all of which are legitimate rights enshrined in the United Nations Charter and international law.

7. The Conference expressed hope that preoccupation with the effects of the events which befell the United States would not lead the international community to neglect shouldering its responsibilities vis-à-vis the State terrorism practised by the Israeli Government and to which the Palestinian people is being subjected and Israel's serious escalation of the situation in the region.

8. The Conference warned Israel of the consequences of its exploitation of these events as a pretext for perpetuating its aggression against the Palestinian people and the creation of new situations in the region which are likely to jeopardize security and stability therein.

9. The Conference requested the Security Council and the co-sponsors of the peace process, the United States and the Russian Federation, as well as the European Union and its member States, to exert their utmost effective efforts in order to lift the blockade and stop Israel's brutal practices, provide international protection for the Palestinian people and end the Israeli occupation of all Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967.

10. The Conference stressed that the international initiative towards achieving security and stability in a world free from terrorism and injustice must also include the achievement of security and justice for the Palestinian people, the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and the protection of the Christian and Islamic holy places. In this context, the Conference also welcomed the statements of President George W. Bush about the right of the Palestinians to establish their own State, which were supported by the Russian Federation, the European Union, China, Japan, the African States, the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, the international community and the United Nations, as a positive development in conformity with the resolutions of international legitimacy. It further expressed hope that the United States would immediately initiate the practical implementation of that issue and endeavour to achieve this strategic objective of establishing a just and comprehensive peace for all States and peoples of the region.

11. The Conference expressed its concern over the possible consequences of the fight against terrorism, including the death of innocent civilians in Afghanistan, and underlined the necessity of ensuring the territorial integrity of Afghanistan and its Islamic identity. It rejected the targeting of any Islamic or Arab State under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

12. The Conference welcomed the proposal by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar and Chairman of the Ninth

Islamic Summit Conference, to establish a fund to assist the Afghan people and His Highness's announcement to donate the amount of ten million US dollars (US$ 10,000,000) to this fund. It also welcomed the announcements of donations by the United Arab Emirates in the amount of three million US dollars (US$ 3,000,000), and the Sultanate of Oman in the amount of one million US dollars (US$ 1,000,000) to the fund for assistance to the Afghan people. The Conference took note of the announcement made by His Royal Highness the Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that the Kingdom has made a donation of ten million US dollars to the Afghan people and that the assistance has already reached its destination in Afghanistan. It further took note of the fact that the Kingdom will contribute to the rehabilitation projects specifically developed for the people of Afghanistan and urged the rest of the member States to continue to make donations to this noble humanitarian cause.